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Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

Letter dated 22 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General*

Under the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 22 May 2002 from Abdul Sattar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, drawing your kind attention to the deteriorating situation in South Asia, which represents a grave threat to international peace and security (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 10.

(*Signed*) Munir **Akram**
Ambassador and Permanent Representative-designate

* Also circulated under the symbol S/2002/571.

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Annex to the letter dated 22 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The United Nations is the repository of humanity's hopes for the prevention of war and for the promotion of the peaceful settlement of international disputes in conformity with the principles of justice and international law. In that perspective, the Government of Pakistan draws your attention to Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations, which provides for resort to peaceful means for the resolution of differences and the maintenance of international peace and security through negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, enquiry, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or other peaceful means.

For the past five months, dangerous tensions have been whipped up in South Asia. India has moved forward and deployed nearly 1 million troops in battle position along the international border with Pakistan, the working boundary and the Line of Control in Kashmir.

Despite the hundreds of thousands of troops it has stationed and the sophisticated devices it has deployed along the Line of Control, India accuses Pakistan of infiltration across the Line of Control. In making uncorroborated charges, India refuses to submit its allegations to monitoring by the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) or impartial surveillance and investigation. It disallows free access to international media and international human rights organizations in Occupied Kashmir that can independently assess the real situation in the territory. India also asserts that it will know when the alleged infiltration ceases, thus arrogating to itself the role of the accuser and the judge.

The Indian leadership routinely blames Pakistan for every violent incident inside India and in Occupied Kashmir. Some ruling BJP leaders have been accusing Pakistan even for the carnage in Gujarat, even though the Indian political opposition as well as local and international human rights groups placed the responsibility squarely on Hindu fanatics belonging to extremist organizations like the RSS — the parent body of the ruling BJP — VHP, Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena. The state government of Gujarat, which is controlled by BJP, actually aided and abetted the pogroms of Muslims. Human Rights Watch in its report on the Gujarat carnage has concluded that "attacks on the Muslims throughout the state were planned, well in advance of the Godhra incident, and organized with extensive police participation and in close cooperation with officials of the BJP State Government". Similarly a report by a women's panel sponsored by Citizen's Initiative observes that "the State ... abdicated its responsibilities to protect all its citizens. Far worse, it actively connived in the maiming, raping and butchering of hundreds of women and children of Gujarat".

The same attitude has been adopted by the Indian Government on incidents of violence inside Occupied Kashmir. Whether it was the Chitisingpura incident in March 2000 or the Amarnath Yatra killings later in the year, the Indian authorities alleged Pakistani involvement. Such false accusations malign the Kashmiri freedom struggle and are part of a propaganda strategy to perpetuate Indian occupation of the state. According to the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, over 75,000 Kashmiris have been massacred by Indian military, paramilitary and police forces.

India not only refused impartial international inquiries into these and other similar cases, but also abandoned its own investigations when it began to appear that these murders may actually have been staged by Indian forces. The case of tampering with the DNA tests of innocent Kashmiris, killed as terrorists responsible for the Chitisingpura massacre, is too well-known to bear repetition.

The latest attack on a military camp in Jammu on 14 May 2002 has led to a new stridency in the Indian threats. The Defence Minister of India has talked about "punishing" Pakistan. The Indian army chief has publicly stated: "The time for words is over. It is time for action." In a resolution adopted by both houses of the Indian Parliament on 17 May, Pakistan was accused of encouraging terrorism. On 18 May, the Indian Government asked for the withdrawal of our High Commissioner in New Delhi. The Indian motive in making these threatening and belligerent statements and maintaining the dangerous escalation and troop build-up is obvious. It is embarked on coercive diplomacy aimed at pressing Pakistan to abandon its principled position on Kashmir. The BJP Government also wishes to deflect international attention from the ongoing massacre of the minority Muslim community in Gujarat as well as other domestic failings.

The United Nations and the international community must ask why is it that India is preparing to go to war with Pakistan, with all its dangerous consequences, while it rejects universally recognized peaceful means for the settlement of differences as well as proposals for impartial investigation, monitoring, fact-finding or assistance to bring down tension. This cannot be the attitude of a responsible State that respects Charter principles and believes in peace and norms of international conduct. It is the behaviour of an arrogant Power that is bent upon exploiting the current international environment and concerns to its own advantage and believes that it has a licence to commit aggression under the pretext of the fight against terrorism.

Pakistan, as part of the international coalition against terrorism, is engaged in a serious effort to combat international terrorism and cleanse our society of extremism. Our efforts are hampered by the escalation and tension resulting from the massive Indian troop build-up along our borders. However, while we wish to avoid conflict, we are also ready to meet resolutely any aggression by India, in the exercise of our inherent right to self-defence, against the territory of Pakistan or the territories in Kashmir whose defence remains our responsibility. We wish to avoid such a development, but we cannot afford to slacken our vigilance and preparedness.

We are ready to cooperate with any effort or good offices by the United Nations or the international community for reducing tension, preserving peace and promoting dialogue between the two countries.

I am bringing the prevailing situation between Pakistan and India to the attention of Your Excellency for measures deemed appropriate by you. The explosive situation created by India by amassing troops on our border and the Line of Control as well as the unwarranted and threatening statements of the Indian leaders represent a grave threat to peace and security in the region. We therefore call on the United Nations and the international community to use their good offices with India and to advise it to choose the path of dialogue and negotiations as against confrontation to resolve the issue of Jammu and Kashmir and other outstanding issues between the two countries.

I request Your Excellency to have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Abdul Sattar
Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan